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Before the FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION Washington, D. C. 20554

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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In the Matter of)	
Redevelopment of Spectrum to Encourage Innovation in the))	ET Docket No. 92-9
Use of New Telecommunications)	RM-7981
Technologies)	RM-8004

COMMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION

The United States Telephone Association (USTA) respectfully submits its comments in the above-referenced proceeding. USTA is the principal trade association of the exchange carrier industry. Its membership provides over 98 percent of the exchange carrier-provided access lines in the U. S. Some of USTA's member companies currently utilize the 2 GHz frequency band to provide service. USTA's member companies are also interested in offering new wireless personal communications services (PCS) in that portion of the 2 GHz band which the Commission will allocate for PCS. Therefore, USTA's member companies will be affected by the channelization plans at issue in this proceeding.

In the Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking released
September 4, 1992, the Commission is proposing to reallocate five
bands above 3 GHz to private and common carrier fixed microwave
use on a co-primary basis and to prescribe additional technical
standards to govern use of these bands. USTA supports the
Commission's effort to adopt channelization plans for the upper

bands that will accommodate both narrowband and wideband systems. Uncontrolled relocation of narrowband systems to the upper bands will not ensure optimal use of the spectrum to be made available pursuant to this proceeding. In developing the necessary channelization plans, the Commission should focus on encouraging the most efficient utilization of spectrum. This must include the grandfathering of frequency plans to ensure optimal frequency utilization.

1. 4 GHz Rechannelization.

Given the proliferation of 4 GHz satellite down links, the use of 4 GHz frequencies may be severely restricted on all channels except those growth channels that have been secured through the prior coordination process. Because of such constraints, the 4 GHz band may prove to be less attractive to relocated 2 GHz licensees.

The proposed 4 GHz frequency plan seeks to designate separate blocks of spectrum for transmit and receive frequencies. This would be consistent with other common carrier bands, as opposed to the existing plan which interleaves transmit and receive frequencies. USTA supports the proposed plan. However, as noted above, transitioning to the new plan may only be possible in areas that are currently void of any 4 GHz point-to-point licensees. A station licensed under the new plan, transmitting on the upper or lower half of the band, could

potentially interfere with receivers on both ends of a victim path. This could double the number of potential interfering and interfered stations which must be analyzed and cleared. In addition, many paths have outstanding prior coordinations that identify growth frequencies on licensed paths. Grandfathering established growth plans may be necessary to avoid interference created by the proposed frequency changes in areas where there are 4 GHz licensees operating on the existing plan.

2. 6 GHz Rechannelization.

The proposed 6 GHz rechannelization plan specifies a 30 MHz bandwidth as opposed to the existing 29.65 MHz bandwidth. While this change will accommodate narrowband and wideband channels, it will also present significant challenges. The frequency offset of the new channels varies from 200 kHz to 2.2 MHz. variation will create a carrier beat interference potential between analog systems, particularly in congested areas. current ratio between analog and digital systems is approximately 4 to 1 for the private sector and is approximately 1 to 4 for common carriers. Private systems are primarily narrowband. carrier beat interference potential will be affected not only by the change in the 30 MHz center frequencies, but also by the additional narrowband channels which have been interleaved with the wideband slots. Many systems close to established routes may require the use of currently established growth plans. grandfathering current frequency growth plans may be necessary.

USTA recommends that the Commission encourage potential 6 GHz analog licensees to use the upper portion (6525-6875 MHz) of the band which is currently allocated for narrowband use, particularly if the system requires 10 MHz or less of bandwidth. This will preserve the integrity of the remainder of the 6 GHz band for common carrier use, which is primarily wideband. Analog systems with bandwidths greater than 10 MHz should be encouraged to adhere to the proposed channel plan where feasible. Licensing based on the existing plan should be permitted in other instances. In addition, systems with bandwidths of 10 MHz or less should also be required, initially, to use frequencies currently allocated for narrowband systems. If channel availability precluded narrowband use of the upper 6 GHz frequencies, the lower portion of the band could be utilized, as outlined in the proposed rechannelization plan. Grouping like systems will promote spectrum efficiency and ease coordination.

3. 11 GHz Rechannelization.

The proposed 11 GHz rechannelization plan decreases the bandwidth from 40 MHz to 30 MHz. This plan promotes spectrum efficiency, yet may be technically feasible only for new routes. The Commission should allow, therefore, for the grandfathering of frequency plans currently in place. Channel additions may be difficult, if not impossible, on some routes unless grandfathering is permitted. Growth plans should continue to be coordinated and harmonized to promote spectrum efficiency.

4. Access to Government Spectrum.

USTA agrees with the Commission that this proceeding should not be delayed pending negotiations with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration for access by non-government licensees to the 1.71 to 1.85 GHz government band. However, USTA urges the Commission to continue to vigorously pursue this issue and to make every effort to obtain access to adjacent government bands.

The technical characteristics of the government band adjacent to the bands to be allocated for emerging technologies are almost identical. Therefore, relocation to these government bands is not only appropriate, but desirable. Only minor engineering changes in equipment design would be required to relocate to those bands. Access to government spectrum would increase the amount of spectrum available for either current or emerging radio-based service and is imperative to accommodate future growth in the demand for wireless services.

5. Coordination Procedures.

Common carriers secure future growth channels through the prior coordination process. This process has proved to be invaluable for establishing long range growth plans, particularly in frequency congested areas. This procedure has also assisted in eliminating potential interference.

Under the Commission's Part 94 rules, private microwave licensees are not required to coordinate frequency use. Instead, they are required to perform interference studies to determine if a proposed system could potentially cause interference to other systems. Private microwave applications must include a showing of the stations and call signs included in the study. Private microwave data bases are updated only after a filing appears on public notice. Under this process, path data information is updated only after a filing appears on public notice.

Common carrier data base information is updated immediately upon receipt of the prior coordination notice. Thus, common carriers can avoid the possibility of developing a system which parallels another system without prior knowledge of the possible interference conflicts. Potential problems can be identified and eliminated prior to the engineering and filing period. This has facilitated system planning and has permitted economical system deployment. Likewise, the Commission has been spared numerous "petitions to deny" that would have resulted if conflicts had not been identified in advance.

The Commission proposes to establish common carrier coordination procedures for all the shared bands except the upper 6 GHz band (6525-6875 MHz), which is currently limited to private use. Rather than maintaining two sets of rules, the Commission should adopt consistent coordination procedures. Without such

rules the upper 6 GHz band could potentially become a haven for licensees who choose the upper 6 GHz band to avoid the 30 day notification period. The Commission should adopt the common carrier prior coordination procedures for all bands.

6. Interference Objectives.

USTA recognizes the need for the swift development of interference standards governing equipment and frequency separation combinations. The Telecommunications Industry Association working group (TIA 14.11) as well as the National Spectrum Managers Association are currently addressing these issues. These processes are open to all users and manufacturers. The Commission should encourage these groups to continue their efforts.

7. Antenna Standards.

USTA supports the development of uniform antenna standards in all frequency bands for both common carrier and private microwave users. Allowing licensees to utilize Category B antennas could lead to further congestion and require new entrants to coordinate around systems with sub-standard antenna systems. The Commission should update and improve the Category A standards for use by all carriers. This will maximize spectrum efficiency and permit full usage of available frequency bands.

8. Automatic Transmit Power Control.

USTA agrees that automatic transmit power control (ATPC) should be permitted under both Part 21 and Part 94 of the Commission's rules. However, USTA believes that a uniform rule should incorporate the current standards for common carriers.

Maximum transmit power should not be exceeded under any circumstance. Established industry bodies should be permitted to establish the appropriate procedures to be used in dealing with ATPC systems during interference analysis.

9. Conclusion.

USTA urges the Commission to adopt channelization plans and technical standards consistent with the recommendations contained in these comments.

Respectfully submitted,

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December 10, 1992

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Stephanie Kantor, do certify that on December 10, 1992 copies of the foregoing comments of the United States Telephone Association were either hand-delivered, or deposited in the U.S. Mail, first-class, postage prepaid to the persons on the attached service list.

9

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